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BENCHMARKS AND INDICATORS

Note by the secretariat

I. INTRODUCTION

1. By its decision 22/COP.1, the Conference of the Parties (COP) requested the Parties and observers to provide comments to the secretariat on the proposed methodology for impact indicators contained in document ICCD/COP(1)/CST/3/Add.1. A synthesis of those comments is to be found in section II below.

2. By the same decision and in accordance with article 24, paragraph 3 of the Convention, the COP appointed an ad hoc panel to act as a steering committee to the open-ended informal consultative process on benchmarks and indicators previously initiated by the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee on Desertification (INCD).

3. At the same time, the COP requested the secretariat to continue, in consultation with the ad hoc panel, such informal process for the purpose of reviewing the methodology for impact indicators contained in ICCD/COP(1)/CST/3/Add.1, and for the purpose of determining how the methodology could be carried out and whether it could be recommended for use to the Conference of the Parties.

II. CONTRIBUTIONS OF PARTIES AND OBSERVERS

4. The secretariat has received written contributions on the methodology for impact indicators contained in ICCD/COP(1)/CST/3/Add.1 from three Parties and two observers. The observations and suggestions concerned the methodology proposed in that document and ongoing experience in the field of benchmarks and indicators. There may be contradictions and overlaps, as is often the case when a collection of viewpoints is summarized. The written contributions may be summarized as follows:

(a) The methodology proposed at this stage covers all the questions that should be taken into account in the selection of an indicator or of its replacements;

(b) A dynamic and practical methodology needs to be designed which can be adapted to the varied circumstances of the regions;

(c) The use of implementation indicators alone might prove incomplete and lead to the unnecessary consumption of resources in the reports of the Parties. It is necessary to develop impact indicators as soon as possible;

(d) The approach of the proposed methodology will require human and material resources for its development; the ad hoc panel on benchmarks and indicators should develop a model by subregion, to serve as a reference tool for developing the systems for follow-up and evaluation of implementation of the Convention at different levels, bearing in mind the bottom-up approach;

(e) It must be ensured that the conditions for implementing the proposed methodology take existing structures into account and provide for the functioning of existing procedures;

(f) In the development of this methodology, it is useful to take existing ongoing work on indicators into account as well as experience acquired in other sectors such as forestry and biodiversity;

(g) Each indicator or each question should have baseline data which can be used as a starting point for evaluating future trends.

III. CONCLUSIONS OF THE AD HOC PANEL

5. The conclusions of the ad hoc panel on benchmarks and indicators are before the CST and the COP in document ICCD/COP(2)/CST/3/Add.1.